

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA**

NORTHERN DYNASTY
MINERALS LTD. and PEBBLE
LIMITED PARTNERSHIP,

Plaintiffs,

v.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
AGENCY,

Defendant.

Case No. 3:24-cv-00059-SLG

DECLARATION OF CHRISTINE HILL

I, Christine Hill, state and affirm as follows:

1. I make this declaration in support of the Sierra Club's Motion to Intervene in the above-captioned litigation. I know these facts of my own personal knowledge and would competently testify to them if called as a witness in these proceedings.

2. I have worked for the Sierra Club for ten years and am the Chief Conservation and Outdoors Officer. In this role, I manage a team of representatives in charge of carrying out the various campaign initiatives within the Lands, Water, and Wildlife campaign, as well as the campaigns to address outdoor access and outdoor equity. I facilitate strategic and tactical planning for various aspects of the campaign, and analyze issues of national importance, collaborating with other campaign staff and

volunteer leaders to formulate and implement campaign strategies. I develop, refine, and implement national strategies to meet the established campaign goals, and evaluate campaign effectiveness at the national level. I also represent the Sierra Club and act as a senior spokesperson with donors, the media, and other organizations.

3. The Sierra Club is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization with headquarters in Oakland, California, and offices in all fifty states. Its mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the planet. It works to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club has over 670,000 members, including over 1,400 members belonging to its Alaska Chapter.

4. The Sierra Club opposes the proposed Pebble Mine and has worked on the issue for over 15 years. The goal of the Sierra Club's Our Wild Alaska Campaign is to protect the most threatened of Alaska's treasured landscapes from destructive industrialization, including the proposed Pebble Mine. Our Wild Alaska Campaign is an important component of the Sierra Club's Conservation campaign, the goal of which is to create a powerful grassroots movement to protect America's public lands and connect people to the outdoors for the benefit of both.

5. Opposing the proposed Pebble Mine and ensuring that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) follows the law in evaluating the proposed

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mine, are consistent with the Sierra Club's mission of exploring, enjoying, and protecting the planet. The proposed Pebble Mine would not be a responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources. The Sierra Club has over 1,400 members in its Alaska Chapter who count on the Sierra Club to oppose environmentally destructive projects like the proposed Pebble Mine.

6. The Sierra Club has focused much of its advocacy on the National Environmental Policy Act and Clean Water Act (CWA) permit processes for the proposed Pebble Mine. The Sierra Club has contributed to and submitted technical comments and has directed its members to participate in these processes during public comment periods. The Sierra Club worked with coalition partners throughout the process of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Army Corps) determination process on whether to issue a permit under Section 404(b) of the CWA (404(b) permit) and EPA's 404(c) Final Determination (Final Determination) process. The Sierra Club has also engaged in membership education on the proposed Pebble Mine, broadcast digital action alerts to members and supporters asking them to send emails and letters encouraging the Army Corps to reject permits, signed on to congressional letters and lobbied congressional leaders to act, and engaged in ongoing legal work opposing the mine. Since submitting comments on the 2019 Draft EIS for the proposed mine, the Sierra Club has submitted formal comments to the Army Corps in support of its denial of the 404(b) permit, to EPA in support of its Final Determination, and to the Alaska Department of Environmental

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Conservation opposing issuance of a 401 certification for the project. We fully supported EPA's 404(c) Final Determination that is challenged in this case because it protects the Bristol Bay watershed from large-scale mining, such as the proposed Pebble Mine, which would irreparably impact the area's wetlands, waters, and fish that depend on them.

7. Numerous Sierra Club members and staff frequent the Bristol Bay area to backpack, fish, and otherwise enjoy the region, and plan to return. I personally have been to the Bristol Bay area a number of times, primarily to fly fish for all the species of fish they have in the rivers, including sockeye salmon. I have been to Katmai National Park a number of times to see the bears at the falls, fly fish the Brooks River and hike around the park. I have fished the Naknek River, and many others in the region as well. It is one of my favorite places in Alaska and by far one of my favorite places to fish. With the largest sockeye run and one of the most prolific king salmon runs, there is not another place in the world like the Bristol Bay region. I hope and plan to continue to return to fish the rivers of the Bristol Bay area for many years to come.

8. The proposed Pebble Mine would damage one of the treasured landscapes the Sierra Club works to protect. Bristol Bay is home to the world's largest sockeye salmon fisheries and one of the most prolific king salmon runs left on this planet. This is largely due to the fact that the Bristol Bay watershed's freshwater habitat is currently untouched by development. These fisheries underpin the region's ecological, economic, social, and cultural well-being. Climate change is already impacting the salmon—and

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those who depend on them. The proposed Pebble Mine would exacerbate these issues. The proposed Pebble Mine would do immediate, irreversible damage to the Bristol Bay watershed, destroying 80 miles of streams and 3,500 acres of wetlands. The mine would also require enormous earthen dams to hold back billions of tons of toxic mine waste—waste that would permanently sit at the headwaters of the world's most productive salmon rivers and need to be managed in perpetuity.

9. The plaintiffs in this litigation seek to reverse EPA's important decision protecting the Bristol Bay region. This would severely harm the interests of the Sierra Club and its members.

10. The Sierra Club seeks to intervene in this lawsuit to ensure the Bristol Bay watershed continues to thrive and our interests in the region and its fisheries remain intact. As described above, we have engaged in this issue for over 15 years. The Final Determination protects Bristol Bay from large-scale mining, such as Pebble Mine, that would cause irreparable harm. The relief that Plaintiffs seek—vacating the Final Determination—would potentially allow large-scale, harmful mining activities, such as the proposed Pebble Mine, to proceed in the future. This would harm the Sierra Club's mission and our members' interests in protecting the Bristol Bay watershed and fisheries.

11. While we support EPA's Final Determination, we can only be sure that our interests are protected by participating in the lawsuit as a party. The Sierra Club is invested in protecting Bristol Bay from the proposed Pebble Mine and can only be sure

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that our interests are protected by participating in the lawsuit as a party. EPA has changed course before, as in 2017 when it abruptly withdrew its Proposed Determination after a change in administration. Agency leadership could change again during the pendency of this lawsuit, especially in light of the upcoming November 2024 election. Only by intervening and gaining the rights of a party can the Sierra Club be sure that its interests and those of its members are protected.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this 7 day of May 2024 in Haines, AK.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Christine Hill', written over a horizontal line.

Christine Hill

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